

# OLD DUXBURY - Its Advantages As A Place To Live

Following are some excerpts from *Old Duxbury - Its Advantages As A Place to Live* which was "presented by Percy L. Walker."

The attractive town of Duxbury is located about 37 miles southward of Boston and just across the bay to the northward from the historic town of Plymouth.

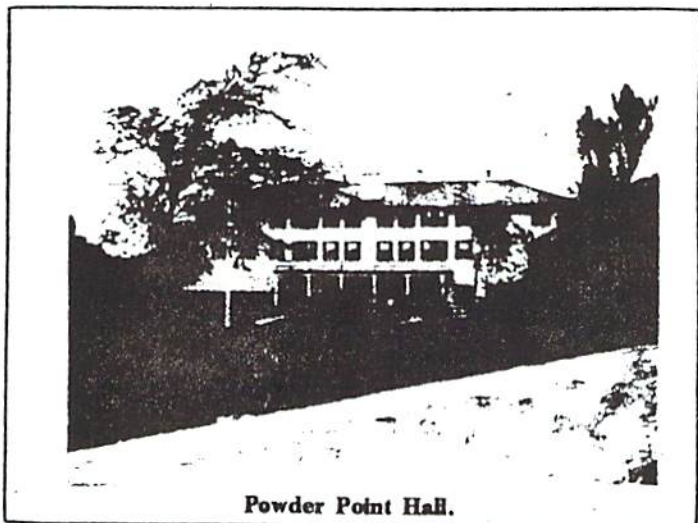
Duxbury was one of the first towns set off from the Plymouth Colony, being incorporated as a separate township in 1637. Considerably before this early date Captain Myles Standish, Elder Brewster and John Alden moved their residences to this place and soon after George Soule was given a grant on Powder Point. These men were among the most prominent of the Pilgrims.

The earliest and practically the only industry the town has ever had, was ship-building and through this it became famous in the world of commerce. The first vessel of which there is any record was built on the west side of Captain's Hill in 1720, and from that time until 1874, when the last vessel was launched, a thriving business grew to large proportions, declined and disappeared. The zenith of Duxbury's career in ship-building occurred between 1820 and 1830. There is a record of 18 ships being under construction at one time.

The remains of the many wharves indicate clearly the extent of the business of those days. The harbor, which would not be adequate for ships of the size now being built, easily floated at high water the square-riggers and the schooners of earlier days. "Nearly all of the inhabitants of Duxbury during the latter part of the 18th century were connected, directly or indirectly, or at least, dependent in some degree on the sea for their support," an early history tells us.

Not only were the ships built in the town but they were manned mostly by its residents. Duxbury became celebrated for the splendid construction and fine models of her ships, also for the reputation of her shipmasters.

The above-mentioned history is given at some length because it determined to a

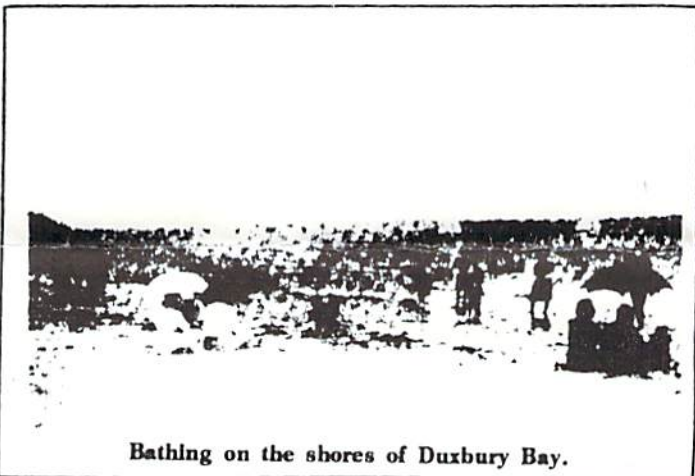


Powder Point Hall.

Ezra Weston's fleet comprised 130 sail. This great enterprise was unique through its completeness. Mr. Weston operated a shipyard, sparyard, rope-walk, blacksmith shops, rigging loft, etc., great tracts of timber land and extensive farms. His ships were built, fitted out and provisioned, all without asking help outside his own industry. His own Grand Banks fishermen caught the cod which served in part to provision his off-shore fleet, other vessels brought salt from the West Indies to cure the fish and his farm lands furnished meats and provisions. In the rooms of this house may be seen some unusually fine tapestry wallpaper, put on when the house was first built.

ship timber caused the loss of Duxbury's only industry. The beautiful bay, however, now serves the pleasant purpose of a recreation place, offering unequalled opportunities for the practice of every aquatic sport. It is a landlocked harbor approximately 8 square miles in area, and adjoining are the smaller arms of Kingston and Plymouth Bays.

Duxbury Bay is the first protected sheet of salt water south of Boston, of sufficient size, to encourage boat sailing. The water of the bay is uncontaminated and is excellent for bathing, being tempered somewhat from the colder ocean water, yet cold enough to be bracing in its effect. There is no undertow, and there are no dangerous curren-



Bathing on the shores of Duxbury Bay.



large extent, the character of the town, as it stands today. Those prosperous days when the residents of the town were in touch more or less with all parts of the world are everywhere evident as one rides through the streets: the many fine old Colonial houses are not equalled by those of any town on the South Shore. If privileged to enter them one would find relics and curios brought from the 4 quarters of the globe, together with paintings of the beautiful ships which brought them home.

The Ezra Weston or King Caesar House was built about 1800. Weston was given the nickname by his contemporaries when he was the largest ship-owner in the U.S.

According to a leading authority on maritime history

Another famous Duxbury house was built in 1807 by Captain Gamaliel Bradford, one of Duxbury's celebrated shipmasters. He served as a lieutenant in the Revolutionary army, and later followed the sea as a livelihood. In 1798 President Adams offered him command of one of the great naval frigates, but he declined the honor, preferring no doubt the more remunerative and less restricted command of a merchant ship. During the French depredations upon our commerce he was called upon to fight off severe attacks of these privateers on 3 occasions, during one of which he suffered the loss of a leg.

The increase in the size of vessels, with their greater draft of water, and the decrease of

is. There is not a safer bay on the whole Atlantic coast. Should one desire surf-bathing, this too is offered on the beautiful outside beach, a wonderful stretch of sand almost entirely free from stones, an excellent playground for children as well as older persons. The outside beach is connected with the mainland at Powder Point by a bridge about one-half mile in length.

The Duxbury Yacht Club, Inc., is an important feature of the summer life. Regattas are held each Saturday and at other special times, including a midseason series of races, occupying 3 days, when many visiting yachts come into the bay. The classes are well represented and very exciting events are held. Dancing parties and other social affairs are regular attractions to be expected at the club house. The Duxbury Golf Club is an adjunct of the Yacht Club, which also owns a golf course, centrally located, and provided with a professional golf-man and assistants.

It would be an unpardonable oversight not to mention among the attractions of this town the native clam, so far-famed for its delicious flavor. the shores of the Bay seem to offer this bivalve the conditions it most desires for it multiplies prolifically, and from the earliest times Duxbury's population has sung the praises of its delectable clam. Today a most generous quantity awaits those who go after



Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hittiger

There are many interesting drives about Duxbury, roads "bound for" surrounding towns and villages yet in no hurry to reach them. Along these roads, everything seems unhurried, peaceful, quaint and orderly, even to the curly headed child, asleep in the sunshine before a cottage door. Here may be found in a day's ramble interesting people, interesting homes, and interesting facts -- old houses whose remote dates on musty old deeds disclose their age. Here is the quietude of country seclusion where manufacturing is unknown.

A spirit of contentment reigns amongst its residents. The old pines nod their welcome to the stranger, the shady drives, the romantic walks and the picturesque surroundings inspire one with health and appreciation of a territory abounding in wholesome principles. The section abounds in historic interests and sites; and intimate little tales, delightfully told by the older inhabitants, must be retained until your expected visit to these parts reveals to you more of its wonders.

Old Duxbury with its bits of woodland and meadow, beautiful water views, old trees, crooked lands and quaint old buildings has attracted artistic talent, and the exhibitions of the Duxbury Art Association at the Partridge Academy in Duxbury are highly appreciated and well attended.

In living in Old Duxbury one does not feel the isolation which is such a barrier to many places outside the city limits. In Duxbury there is every advantage the country home-seeker could reasonably demand, and parents, who, from a sense of duty to the growing family, are seeking a home, not too far from the city to be of disadvantage, will do well to visit Duxbury.

Old Duxbury as a summer resort is delightful; as a permanent residence, ideal. In these days of high costs, crowded apartments and near-

summer visitors. It is well supplied with choice selections -- volumes old and volumes new, to suit the fancy.

There are Unitarian, Congregational and Episcopal churches, and Catholic services are held during the summer months in one of the large halls.

Powder Point Hall is the leading hotel. It has been under the same management for many years and its many patrons, returning year after year, are its best advertisement.

There is no manufacturing in Duxbury and no foreign element. There are no street cars. Duxbury remains more nearly unspoiled, more suggestive of the old simple colonial days than most of the other ship-building towns.

Electricity for lighting and other household purposes is supplied by the Plymouth electric Light Company.

The running time of the best train to Boston is one hour. The comparative nearness of the shore-line and residential sections to the railroad stations makes commuting easy.



There used to be twin houses on Gard Street. There's only one now. The country has had its Word.



them, a clam rake and the necessary muscle being the requisite outfit to insure success.

Unlike many shore localities Duxbury has many trees due as well to a civic pride as to Nature. From the days of Standish, Brewster, Alden and Soule, residents of Duxbury have been planting trees, and today we are reaping the reward of the thoughtfulness of those great men. Not only the main streets but also the pretty by-ways leading to the shore are shaded with beautiful elms, Duxbury's best antiques, trees that have listened to the voices of the Pilgrims, broad-armed witnesses of years that are passed. Even in the more exposed localities as at Powder Point and at the Standish Shore, 2 peninsulas extending into Duxbury Bay, there is an abundance of foliage, and many beautiful gardens may be seen around the attractive summer homes in these localities.

city of homes, one does well to look beyond the city, to think beyond the brick walls which shut out the sunlight due a growing child, to plan to get a full share of the fresh air, pure water, and the big outdoors; in short, to get more out of life, for one's efforts.

The Duxbury town water is highly endorsed by the Massachusetts State Board of Health, who make periodic analyses of municipal waters. It is "very soft and in all respects of excellent quality for drinking and other domestic purposes." The supply is practically inexhaustible, having stood the severest tests. This important matter, so vital to health, has been a determining factor with many people when seeking a home.

There are several fine schools in Duxbury. Partridge Academy, an endowed institution, is combined with the Duxbury High School. There are the usual grammar and primary schools.

There is a fine public library given and endowed by public-spirited townsmen, and its privileges are extended to the



The Capt. Erasmus Sampson House.